

Message Text

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14-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 716

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, KS

SUBJECT: CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS PROPOSED

REF: SEOUL 4265

1. PRESS JUNE 17 REPORTS THAT ROKG IS PLANNING TO CREATE NATIONAL CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS WITH ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP OF 3.5 MILLION. PLAN FOR CORPS WAS DRAFTED BY HOME MINISTRY AND WILL BE SUBMITTED TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT SPECIAL SESSION STARTING JUNE 28 IF APPROVED BY CABINET.

2. MEMBERSHIP IN CORPS WILL REPORTEDLY BE MANDATORY FOR ALL MALES FROM 17-50 YEARS OF AGE WITH EXCEPTION MEMBERS OF GROUPS SUCH AS MILITARY, HOMELAND RESERVE, POLICE, FIREMEN AND CERTAIN SKILLED TECHNICIANS. WOMEN 17-50 YEARS OLD AND MEN 51-60 CAN VOLUNTEER FOR CORPS. LOCAL GOVERNMENT JURISDICTIONS, AS WELL AS ALL BUSINESSES EMPLOYING MORE THAN 30 MALES, MUST HAVE THEIR OWN CIVIL DEFENSE UNITS.

3. PROPOSED LEGISLATION REPORTEDLY CONTAINS PUNITIVE

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PROVISIONS FOR THOSE WHO FAIL TO JOIN CORPS AND

REQUIREMENT FOR ALL MEMBERS TO REPORT ANY CHANGE IN THEIR LOCATION TO GOVERNMENT. PLANNED ACTIVITIES OF CORPS NOT REPORTED EXCEPT FOR GENERAL STATEMENT THAT MEMBERS WILL TRAIN FOR MOBILIZATION, BE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW ORDERS FROM UNIT LEADERS AND MAY BE REQUIRED TO PROTECT PUBLIC ORDER IN EMERGENCY.

4. COMMENT: ROKG'S IMMEDIATE PURPOSE IN ANNOUNCING CORPS IS CLEARLY TO KEEP THREAT FROM NORTH IN PUBLIC'S MIND. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO ACTUALLY IMPLEMENT PLAN AS OUTLINED. CREATION OF CORPS ON SCALE PROPOSED WOULD PLACE VIRTUALLY ALL MALE KOREANS FROM 17 TO 50 YEARS OF AGE UNDER SOME DIRECT FORM OF MILITARY DISCIPLINE. SNEIDER

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